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## TRAINING A SOCIALIZED RURAL LEADERSHIP

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Until the present time the training of elementary teachers of rural schools has been placed on a temporary basis only. The time has now come when some plan for permanent organization of this training should be formulated and adopted. The purpose of this article is to present a tentative outline of such a scheme. The discussion is restricted to conditions prevailing in Minnesota, with which the writer is most familiar.

*Scope of discussion.*—The article includes:

I. A brief survey of the present status of training elementary teachers for rural schools in Minnesota.

II. Types of training demanded by the present needs of the rural schools of the state.

III. A tentative outline of an organization providing these types of training.

*Principles underlying discussion.*—The discussion is based on three principles:

1. *The place of birth and the surroundings of early youth are beyond the control of the child, therefore these conditions should deprive no child of an opportunity to participate to the fullest extent of his capacity and ability in the minimum essentials of an elementary education adapted to his needs and capacity, fitted to the best interests of society, and provided at public expense.* Professor John Dewey stated the ideal toward which we should strive most impressively when he wrote,<sup>1</sup> "What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must the community want for all of its children. Any other ideal for our schools is narrow and unlovely; acted upon, it destroys our democracy." In the statement of the financial needs of his school system, one of the leading city superintendents

<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, *School and Society*, p. 19.

of the country recently gave concrete application to this principle when he said, "In short, how deeply do the people of Minneapolis desire that every child and youth in the city be provided with educational opportunities equal to those provided at public expense for any child or youth in the city."<sup>1</sup> Minnesota has recognized the justice of this principle, and at the close of the school year 1915-16 paid out from the state treasury approximately two million dollars in an effort more equally to distribute the educational opportunities within the state.<sup>2</sup>

2. *If the boys and girls in the country are to be given an opportunity to participate in an elementary education equal to that provided at public expense for the children in the cities, then the elementary schools in the country should be provided with just as well-trained teachers as the elementary schools in the city.* It is quite generally recognized that such is not the case. The teacher-training departments in the high schools and the county training schools supply the rural school with the majority of its trained teachers. These are conceded to be short cuts to the teaching profession, and more or less makeshifts. Few graduates of a course in a normal school requiring two years beyond the completion of standard high school enter the rural schools. The teachers in the rural schools who have had training in a normal school consist largely of those who have had but one year of training beyond the high school in the course for teachers in city school systems, and those who have completed a special course for rural teachers which is less rigid than the one required of the teachers in the city. Many rural teachers have but barely met the minimum requirements for professional training prescribed by state legislation; others are only eighth-grade graduates with the most meager professional training; and many are without either professional training or experience.

Recent studies verify the prevalence of these conditions. The *Report of the United States Commissioner of Education* says, "The most careful estimates that can be made indicate that one-third

<sup>1</sup> Frank E. Spaulding, *The Price of Progress*, p. vi.

<sup>2</sup> The sum of \$2,594,909 was demanded, but the inadequacy of legislative appropriations left a deficit of \$654,000. See *Nineteenth Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Instruction*.

of the teachers, 122,000, have little or no professional preparation for their duties."<sup>1</sup> The Maryland Survey reports, "Over 75 per cent of the elementary teachers outside of the city of Baltimore when judged most liberally, have had less than a standard professional training."<sup>2</sup> In Wisconsin during 1913-14 there were 5,528 grade and kindergarten teachers employed in the schools, not including rural teachers. Of these, 3,238, or almost 60 per cent, were graduates of normal schools. The same year there were 6,639 teachers employed in the rural schools. Of this group, only 414, or slightly over 6 per cent, were normal-school graduates, and 192 of these had completed special courses for rural teachers which are not of as high standard as those required of elementary teachers in town and city schools.<sup>3</sup> If democracy of educational opportunities is to be afforded country children in the elementary school, the need of a rural teaching force with a training equal to that of other elementary teachers needs no further argument.

3. *If the rural school is to be provided with as well-trained teachers as are the city schools, then courses for elementary teachers in rural schools of the same standard as those offered to elementary teachers in city schools must be established.* Such courses are not common at the present time. The normal schools have been severely taxed to supply the demand of the city schools for trained teachers. Three teacher-training institutions—the First District Normal School at Kirksville, Missouri; the Illinois State Normal University at Normal, Illinois; and the Iowa State Teachers College at Cedar Falls, Iowa—have made special efforts to meet the rural needs. These three institutions have been and are recognized as leaders in this field. In each of these institutions the completion of a course in a standard high school has been made an entrance requirement to those preparing for positions in town and city schools, but students with one and two years of high-school training

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the United States Commissioner of Education*, I (1915), 96.

<sup>2</sup> *Public Education in Maryland*, p. 73. See in greater detail on p. 60.

<sup>3</sup> The figures on which these percentages are based are taken from "Conditions and Needs of Wisconsin's Normal Schools," *Report of Co-operative Survey* (A. N. Farmer, Director), pp. 564a and 574-75.

and even with only eighth-grade preparation are freely admitted to the courses for rural teachers.<sup>1</sup>

The recent and vigorous attacks that have been made on rural problems have suddenly precipitated this new task on institutions already overworked. The rapid increase of educational expenditures for well-established teacher-training activities has made it difficult to obtain sufficient funds with which to organize new projects in a thorough manner. The movement has been besieged by all the difficulties confronting the organization of a new type of training. A supply of trained leaders familiar with the problems of rural education has not been available to fill teaching and administrative positions opened up by these new responsibilities. These positions have been filled either by persons trained in other fields or by those who have through long years of experience in the country schools reached a higher degree of efficiency than their less alert and more amateur fellow-workers. The former course has often resulted in an attempt to fit methods effective in other fields to the new conditions at the expense of differences inherent in the new situation. The immediacy of administrative problems has often superseded the need for fundamental adjustments. In the latter case a rich experience has often been secured at the cost of academic and professional training. The fact that one has out-distanced his peers through the method of trial and error and has come to be considered a superior teacher is not an adequate guaranty that he is able to transmit a proper training to the uninitiated. These leaders have put up a heroic fight to meet the needs of the new field, to overcome the lack of academic training, and to meet the demands for professional insight. Much progress has been made.<sup>2</sup> However, in general they have not succeeded in giving courses in rural education the same amount of respect that is enjoyed by those offered in preparation for teaching positions in city schools.

<sup>1</sup> See *First District Normal School Bulletin*, Kirksville, Missouri, 1915; the *Normal School Quarterly*, Normal, Illinois, 1915; and *Bulletin Iowa State Teachers College*, Vol. XV, No. 3, Cedar Falls, Iowa, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> See Ernest Burnham, "A Decade of Progress in the Training of Rural Teachers," *National Education Association Proceedings* (1915), pp. 801-7.

A normal-school president recently expressed the situation very concretely. On being asked in October how many teachers his institution would send into the rural schools in the coming year, he replied that it was too early to make a reliable estimate, because many of the students would not "confess such intentions" until the very last part of the year. A progressive county superintendent puts the matter just as squarely. His opinion was asked as to the comparative efficiency of the teacher-training departments in the high schools and the normal schools in supplying teachers for his rural schools. This superintendent has worked out an effective system of supervision. He has seven assistants working under him. His response was that if he went to the training departments he would find all kinds of abilities to select from; but if he went to the normal schools he would be put off until late in the season and then have his selection restricted to two classes of students: the one class desiring only temporary employment until sufficient funds might be accumulated to complete the regular normal-school course for elementary teachers of town and city schools; the other class consisting of those who had graduated from this course for teachers of city schools, but failed to secure a position in a city system. This county superintendent has exceptional inducements to offer to rural teachers. A teacher is started at a tempting salary determined by her training and experience; in many cases she is provided with a furnished home in which she may live with comfort and at a nominal expense; and his scheme for rating teachers makes it possible for her to draw a salary of \$99.50 at the end of a six-year term of service.

As a result of these honest, but hampered and more or less crude, attempts to meet the needs of rural teachers, a social stigma has been cast over courses in rural education. It is difficult to enlist in them students of the most promising abilities, of adequate training, and with red blood. Citizens of a democracy strive for the best. It is difficult to sell them "shoddy goods," especially if they are labeled and stamped as such. Nevertheless the solution of many rural problems depends on the efforts of well-prepared teachers of strong potential ability and alert to the vital needs of the field. There is nothing mystical about these problems; their

solutions are not brought about through the incantations of magicians; short and cheap methods avail little as permanent remedies; but the same careful, tedious, and painstaking efforts of skilled workers are demanded as are obligatory in other fields of educational progress. In this case the price of democracy of educational opportunities in the elementary schools of country and city is that courses of preparation be provided for prospective teachers which will challenge an equal degree of respect from them.

#### I. BRIEF SURVEY OF THE PRESENT STATUS OF TRAINING RURAL TEACHERS IN MINNESOTA

The several attempts which have been made in recent years to train rural teachers are to be commended and denote much progress. However, even in this state, where the State Department of Education has ever been in the vanguard of the movement; where the legislature has been most liberal in subsidizing the work from the state treasury; where the university through its College of Agriculture has done its share; where the normal schools have participated to some extent; and where the instructors in the teacher-training departments of the high schools, the state high-school inspectors, and the city and county superintendents have labored shoulder to shoulder for the advancement of the cause—even under these most favorable conditions the most optimistic supporters of the movement must confess that the training of these teachers is in an unsettled stage.

The majority of trained teachers entering the rural schools are graduates from the teacher-training departments in the high schools. There were 1,129 of these graduates in 1914, 1,318 recommended for certification in 1915, and 1,559 certificates granted in 1916.<sup>1</sup>

Of the five normal schools in the state two have organized departments of rural education. In the past these departments have offered only a one-year course. In one school only high-school graduates have been permitted to enter; in the other, students with less preparation have been admitted; and within the

<sup>1</sup> See twenty-second and twenty-third *Annual Reports of the State High-School Inspector*.

past year these two schools have organized a two-year course based on the completion of a standardized high-school course for prospective rural teachers. Only a few students are pursuing the second year of this course. All students expecting to teach in the rural schools are enrolled in the rural departments. This includes those who plan to teach in the country schools while earning the amount necessary to complete the course required of elementary teachers in the town and city schools.<sup>1</sup>

The only differentiation from the regular course offered to those planning for city school positions made in these two-year courses for rural teachers is that one-quarter of the time be spent in the special field of rural education. Elementary agriculture, home economics for rural teachers, rural methods, rural sociology, and rural practice teaching constitute this specialized work. There is no differentiation made in the common branches which these teachers must teach in the rural schools, but the prospective rural and city teachers pursue these courses in the same classes.<sup>2</sup>

In the other three normal schools no special efforts are made to encourage students to enter the rural schools. A course in rural-school management is provided for those who plan to teach in the country schools. No arrangements have been made to afford practice-teaching facilities under rural conditions.

The training of rural teachers is still a matter in which a number of teacher-training agencies are free to meddle. The work remains narrow in its scope and temporary in its character. It is still struggling to attain some degree of respectability. The fundamental problem confronting rural education in the state today is that of securing some adequate and permanent means of training the elementary teachers of rural schools. Some existing type of institution must be designated to take up this work, or a new one

<sup>1</sup> "Students who wish to do so may take a first-grade certificate at the end of their Junior year and go out to teach temporarily. They are required to take as their Junior work the first year of the rural-school course, including a unit and a half of practice teaching. . . . Students who complete the Junior rural-education year are credited with one full year toward the regular advanced diploma, so that if they wish later to change their field it will cause no loss of time to do so."—*Winona State Normal School Bulletin* (1916), p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



created to perform this special service. Until the state has made such a provision, the growth and development of rural education will be precarious and uncertain.

New teacher-training institutions are expensive. They are extravagantly dispersive and wasteful of both finances and energy. Overhead and administrative expenses are materially increased; buildings, equipment, and teaching forces are duplicated; and the upkeep costs are greatly increased. In a constantly widening and expanding school system new demands are continually made on teacher-training institutions. If these agencies prove flexible enough to meet the new needs through necessary readaptations, much progress is made. Existing organizations provide a ready mechanism for the immediate discharge of new activities; they are accelerated by the new responses; and society is given maximum returns for minimum expenditures. Separate teacher-training institutions are open to danger of dissipating energy through needless competition caused by artificial lines of segregation.

The normal schools of the state are confining themselves to the field of the elementary school.<sup>1</sup> Since the training of elementary teachers of rural schools is an adaptation of their present activities to the needs of many communities in the state, it seems logical that they should assume the responsibilities of adequately and permanently developing the necessary organization and technique for this training. Through these organized institutions vitally engaged in the solution of related problems this service should be rendered most adequately, efficiently, and economically.

## II. TYPES OF TRAINING DEMANDED BY NEEDS OF RURAL SCHOOLS

The present rural situation justifies the normal schools in making provision for three types of training: (1) preparation of teachers for one-room rural schools, (2) preparation of elementary teachers for consolidated schools, and (3) preparation of supervisors for rural schools.

1. *Preparation of teachers for one-room rural schools.*—A part of the pioneer work in this field has been performed by the system of training which has developed in the teacher-training depart-

<sup>1</sup> See President Maxwell's *Report of Winona State Normal School* (1910-12), p. 105.

ments of the high schools. By an act of the legislature in 1903 these departments were given official recognition by the state. Previous to the act a few departments had been supported through the initiative of local school systems. The movement grew slowly. In 1907-8 there were only 10 departments; in 1909-10 there were 27; a period of rapid growth followed, for 81 were reported in 1911-12; in 1913-14 the number had increased to 106;<sup>1</sup> and in 1915-16 the number reached 129.<sup>2</sup>

The curriculum of these training departments is overcrowded with subject-matter. Courses are given in pedagogy, rural-school management, and country life. Instruction in the common branches based on the Minnesota state course of study is required. Industrial work (including primary handwork, agriculture and nature-study, cooking and sewing, manual training, drawing, and music<sup>3</sup>) is provided in each department. At the beginning of the year three weeks of observation work are required of each student. This is followed by practice teaching, of which from forty to sixty minutes of actual practice teaching per day throughout the rest of the year is required of each student. Each student receives at least two weeks of practice teaching in a rural school. The organization of a spring primary class is recommended in order that each student may receive actual practice with beginners. At least one day each month is given to the instructor in the department to visit rural schools. Only one year is given to the course.<sup>4</sup>

Under the present plan of organization these departments are rapidly reaching their limitations. In the greater number of them the work in agriculture, cooking and sewing, and manual training is offered by the special instructors of these subjects in the high school. All other instruction is given by the instructor in the training department. The average enrolment of the department is thirteen.<sup>5</sup> This training instructor must direct the observation

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin F. Pittinger, *Rural Teachers' Training Departments in Minnesota High Schools*, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> See twenty-second and twenty-third *Annual Reports of the State High-School Inspector*.

<sup>3</sup> State High-School Board Rules, 1914.

<sup>4</sup> State High-School Board Rules, 1915.

<sup>5</sup> See twenty-third *Annual Report of the State High-School Inspector*.

work. In 1915-16 forty-one of the departments aided in the support of rural schools used for purposes of observation and demonstration. These must be supervised. Practice-teaching facilities are provided in the local school system; spring primary classes are organized in many departments; and affiliations are made with a number of rural schools providing for rural practice teaching. If these activities are to prove efficient they must be most carefully supervised. The extension activities of the departments draw heavily on the time of the training instructor.

The State Department of Education has had the insight to place these teacher-training departments under most capable supervision; the instructors are women with initiative and professional spirit of an exceptionally high order;<sup>1</sup> the city superintendents have given the departments most careful guidance; and the county superintendents have stood as a unit in consistently urging that the work be adapted to the needs of rural teachers. The entrance requirements to the departments have been gradually raised until only graduates of accredited high schools are admitted. The course is crowded with subject-matter, and pressure is being exerted to extend it through two years. The courses should be extended and intensified. The practice-teaching facilities should be extended and placed under competent supervision. In 1915-16 five of the departments had responded to the need for expansion and were employing two teachers.<sup>2</sup> It is impossible for the 120 high schools of the state maintaining departments to assume separately the responsibilities demanded by the movement for growth.

This work can be done much more advantageously by the normal schools. They possess the advantage of being able to place each subject in charge of a specialist. The practice teaching can be better organized and more closely supervised. In many other ways they possess such great advantages over other teacher-training agencies for performing this service as to enable them to demon-

<sup>1</sup> Twenty-third *Annual Report of the State High-School Inspector*. During the summer of 1916, 80 per cent of the instructors in the teacher-training departments either taught in, or attended, summer schools.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

strate their superior fitness with comparative ease. The normal schools are facing a most auspicious opportunity. The time for organizing this training on a more comprehensive and permanent basis has arrived. Their success depends very much on the care, zeal, and vision with which they enter the work. If either financing or vision is inadequate when the plan for training is adopted, it will fail to equal or surpass the standards set by the most successful among the teacher-training departments in the high schools. Such a catastrophe would result in disaster, for with superior advantages the normal schools must even raise these high standards.

2. *Preparation of elementary teachers for consolidated schools.*—Many times special teachers for these schools have been promised, but no provision has been made for their training. This responsibility has been placed on no one teacher-training agency, but has been intrusted to chance pure and simple. Patrons of rural schools have been assured that the consolidated system will provide them with a school adapted to their special needs. The potential advantages which the larger district unit provides for increased educational opportunities have been presented with much vigor. These communities have been inspired with a desire to make progress; they have assumed that the needs so glibly pointed out could be met; few have taken the precaution to hesitate and investigate; and immediate preparation should be made for a day when these matters shall be checked up. The type of training needed by these teachers differs in many respects from that demanded either by the teacher of a one-room rural school or by the teacher of the grades in a city school system. A new school has been pledged based on the assumption that teacher-training institutions would rally to meet the need and produce a new type of teacher.

To be sure, the principals of these consolidated schools have been required to offer work in manual training and technical agriculture among their many activities; but the rank and file of elementary teachers who have the actual charge of the children for a much longer time and who bear a much more intimate relationship to them have not been offered a training that will enable them to interpret the common branches from the rural point of view.

Under such conditions the instruction is likely to lack motivation; the school exercises in which the children participate become artificial because their past experiences have not been considered in the presentation of the school work; and there is a danger lest these consolidated schools be as formal as, and no more vitally concerned with, life-activities of the rural people than were their predecessors.

The rural people, under the encouragement of liberal state aid, are rapidly pledging themselves for better rural schools; in 1914-15 there were 90 consolidated schools; in 1915-16 the number had increased to 140; and in 1916-17 there were 217 such schools reported.<sup>1</sup> Strong emphasis has been placed on the organization of the administrative phases of these schools, but little effort has been expended to improve fundamentally the type of instruction in the elementary-school subjects offered in them. It is now up to the teacher-training agencies to redeem the pledge which has been given these communities for a new school. The one hope of making good lies in the training of a new type of teacher. Since the training of these teachers is but an adaptation of the present work of the normal schools to the needs of many communities in the state, it seems reasonable that they should assume the responsibilities involved in organizing and carrying out such a scheme of training. No other teacher-training institutions are so well prepared to perform this much-needed service.

3. *Preparation of supervisors for rural schools.*—Recent studies in the field of rural education have been placing much stress on a need for more adequate supervision.<sup>2</sup> The whole matter of supervision has been much talked about; the present practices have been most severely criticized; the entire system has been railed at; but little progress has been made toward the organization and application of an adequate and comprehensive system of training better supervisors.

The county as a unit of organization has been championed as a panacea. However, the Maryland Survey points out<sup>3</sup> that even

<sup>1</sup> See Minnesota state directories for the respective years.

<sup>2</sup> See *Public Education in Maryland* and the surveys made recently by the U.S. Bureau of Education in Iowa, Washington, North Dakota, Colorado, and Wyoming.

<sup>3</sup> *Public Education in Maryland*, p. 43.

in a state organized on this plan politicians are more or less carefully "groomed" for a few weeks and then placed in these very important supervisory positions. This situation may be anticipated just as long as politicians can perform these duties as well as, or even better than, other applicants for the positions. When the "tricks of the trade" could be acquired in a few weeks, the doctors were "dopesters" rather than physicians, in the common meaning of the term. The stable or office boy of the practicing doctor became the full-pledged physician of tomorrow. As the organization and technique of medicine became more fully developed, the profession began to draw its members from less humble and homely schools of preparation. When teacher-training institutions have placed the organization and technique of the supervisors' training on such a high plane that it cannot be mastered in a short time, the poorly prepared and incompetent will not be able to compete with this professionalized group. However, it can scarcely be expected that present incumbents of these positions, weak and incompetent as individual members may be, will be replaced by others until a class of trained supervisors who are able to demonstrate their superiority over the untrained group has been produced. The fundamental need is a profession of rural supervisors. This profession must be based on a course extending through at least three years beyond the high school and demanding a rigorous and systematic treatment of the problems arising in this special field of activity.

In this state the demand for such supervisors is not far off; already the need has been felt, and superintendents of associated districts<sup>1</sup> have been searching for persons to fill these important positions. In the future they will be sought in increasingly larger numbers. To what teacher-training institution in the state may a superintendent go with any assurance that he may secure competently trained candidates to fill these very responsible supervisory positions?

<sup>1</sup> In Minnesota an act of the legislature makes it possible for outlying rural schools to associate with a central town school. The rural schools receive the benefits of supervision and instruction in industrial subjects from the central school. The plan resembles the New England town system in many respects. See State School Laws. In 1915-16 there were 52 central, and 281 outlying rural districts operating under this law. See twenty-third *Annual Report of the State High-School Inspector*.

The county superintendents insist that these rural-school supervisors be placed under their direction. In some cases the superintendents of associated districts urge that the movement may be more quickly developed under their management and are exerting some initiative in opening up the field. A matter of much more common concern and much more fundamental importance is that these supervisors be thoroughly trained to perform the duties which they assume. The chances are that a poorly prepared supervisor will make a failure under either system; that a supervisor trained for the city schools will urbanize and make artificial the school experiences of the children under either system; but that a supervisor competently trained from the rural point of view will work changes for the betterment of rural schools under either system.

Perhaps the most important step that is being taken by the state in rural education today is that of placing these schools under supervision. So far the movement is approaching Minnesota under most ideal circumstances. It is coming by slow degrees rather than by sudden state-wide compulsory legislation. This gives an opportunity for the development of the work in a cautious and thorough manner. It is quite likely that the time is ripe for permissive legislation on this matter. Those counties which have reached the point where the advantages of supervision are appreciated should not only be allowed to add members to their supervisory forces, but should be encouraged to do so by aid from the state.

No other state in the union has at its command so versatile, so well prepared, and so efficient a group of persons to fill immediately these very important supervisory positions as Minnesota through its instructors in the teacher-training departments of the high schools. If the normal schools of the state assume the responsibilities of these teacher-training departments, the gradually increasing demand for these supervisors will absorb those instructors from the teacher-training departments who are gradually released during the period of transition. The supervisory positions will be filled by experts from the beginning, and the state will be able to retain in its service every instructor in the teacher-training depart-

ments who is capable of rendering efficient service in these positions. Minnesota can ill afford to pursue a *laissez faire* policy toward securing competently prepared supervisors for these positions. The state will do well to insist on an adequate training of those employed rather than merely to boast of the large number of untrained supervisors in its service.

In the meantime the present critical stage offers a most promising field to the teacher-training institution which will provide an adequate preparation for such supervisors. Recent studies and investigations in the field of rural education have given a basis on which to begin with some degree of intelligence to develop such a training. These prospective supervisors must not only know the principles and theory underlying their work, but must also be trained in giving suggestions and offering criticisms in such a manner as to gain the hearty support of rural teachers. This training must consist to an appreciable degree of actual field work. Again the normal schools seem best equipped to develop this training. By act of the Normal School Board on August 10, 1915, three-year courses were established in the normal schools for supervisors of other phases of elementary-school work. The demonstration and rural-practice schools maintained by the normal schools in the training of teachers for one-room rural and consolidated schools will afford abundant opportunities for field work. No other teacher-training institutions in the state have such varied resources for the development of the practical phase of this training as have the normal schools.

### III. OUTLINE OF PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

The organization and co-ordination of training rural teachers and supervisors such as has been suggested above, with the present work of the normal schools in preparing elementary teachers of town and city schools and supervisors of other phases of elementary-school work are more simple than the problems at first appear. In much of the professional training—such as psychology, principles and technique of teaching, etc.—those preparing for rural and city schools may pursue the courses in the same classes. This will also be true in courses of a more general and less strictly professional



character—such as English, music, penmanship, etc. Unless the instructors in these courses at the present time are being taxed to the maximum, no additional members to the teaching force will be required for them. Provided that these courses are being presented in such a manner as to meet the needs of elementary teachers in city schools, there will be no call to revise either subject-matter or methods of presentation.

In other courses, such as school management, it will be necessary to separate rural and city teachers. In this subject it will be profitable to subdivide the rural group by offering a course adapted to teachers of one-room rural schools and one meeting the needs of teachers of consolidated schools. The management of the school is different for each of these three types. Specialized rural courses should be taught by members of the rural department.

In such common branches as arithmetic, geography, nature-study, etc., prospective rural and city teachers should receive instruction in separate sections. This segregation into separate groups does not mean that the arithmetic, geography, etc., taught to rural and city children shall differ fundamentally, but it does give the instructor in the normal school a better opportunity to present the subjects to each group of students under conditions much more similar to those found in their practice teaching and in the schools in which they will later teach. The conditions under which the groups will eventually teach will require them to use different methods in the effective presentation of the same subject-matter. The training in the normal school should attempt to meet, as far as possible, the actual conditions under which each group will be teaching.

In the organization of these courses two precautions should be taken. On the one hand, the instructors in the normal school should be protected. These courses are new and unorganized. Each one will require much more time and effort, if it is to be presented in a satisfactory manner, than an additional section of the regular course for elementary teachers of city schools. In case the instructor is already working full time, relief should be provided from part of the regular duties. It would be fair neither to the instructor nor to the course to thrust this extra work on him.

On the other hand, if the instructor in any course feels, and persists in so feeling, that he is unable to serve the teachers better by offering a special course to each group of students, in fairness to the rural-education department such an instructor should not be compelled to offer the course, even if he has the time at his disposal.

It seems quite reasonable to assume that any instructor who is well grounded in his subject-matter and who has a purpose to do so can make the necessary adaptations. Consideration of the limitations of the field and co-operation in its development should be the common possession of those working in it. Too much should not be expected from these courses at the outset by rural-education departments, when instructors are working under the tremendous handicaps inseparable from the present situation. Opportunity should be given these instructors to visit the rural teachers in their schools in an attempt to ascertain a first-hand knowledge of their problems. It seems only fair in return that the instructor give his hearty support to the work and put forth an honest effort to grow in efficiency. It is not fair to an instructor to urge him to accept a task which he considers a burden rather than an opportunity; nor is it fair to the growth of a new department to have its courses forced on one who cannot give them his enthusiastic support. In cases in which it is impossible to make a satisfactory adjustment some more promising method should be made of meeting the situation.

As has been suggested, much practice teaching should be required of each student. In practice teaching, the purpose of which is to instil general principles fundamental to all good teaching, the regular facilities of the normal school will supply the rural teachers. A rural school is by no means absolutely essential for effective drill in these fundamentals and certainly is not feasible from a practical standpoint. After these proper teaching habits have been firmly fixed, no practice teaching should be tolerated which is not given under conditions as nearly like those under which the teacher will work as it is possible to provide.

A rural demonstration school readily accessible from the normal school should be maintained. It should be in charge of an expert

rural teacher. This school should be used for purposes of observation and demonstration, and practice teaching in it should not be permitted. A close relationship with the rural department should be retained; and at all times when students visit it, they should see good teaching adapted to the needs of rural schools.

Affiliations should be made with rural schools in the immediate vicinity of the normal school providing practice-teaching facilities. These schools should be placed in charge of competent teachers, and the instruction should be put under the supervision of the rural-education department. The student should be led gradually to assume full charge and responsibility of the entire school. A real touch of country life should be given the students by requiring them to live in the community and participate in its activities.

Finally provision should be made for some teaching experience in rural schools outside of the area under the control of the normal school. If the rural-education department proves really efficient, the schools under its influence will soon cease to be typical of rural schools in general. This difference will become more exaggerated with the growth of the department. Advantages should be taken of opportunities to do substitute work and any other available means of securing practice teaching under typically rural conditions.

Prospective teachers of consolidated schools should be given practice in typical consolidated schools. Arrangements should be made with accessible consolidated schools providing such facilities. An attempt should be made to secure substitute teaching, and such other plans as may be feasible should be made to supply a variety of practice teaching in representative consolidated schools.

Throughout this discussion a conscious effort has been made to emphasize the importance of giving the students actual practice in performing the activities in which the training is intended to give skill. Not only knowledge of methods of teaching, but also skill in application of them should be outcomes of practice teaching. Under the most favorable conditions into which the product of the rural departments may be sent, these teachers will need much more independence than those who enter the city schools, for geographical distances make as close supervision impossible. In order to secure proper results from the practice teaching in the rural schools, all

such facilities should be placed in charge of a rural supervisor. This supervisor should be provided with ready and rapid means of communication and transportation. Telephone connections with the schools should be established and automobile service made available.

In the training of rural-school supervisors much detailed practice in judging instruction should be required. These prospective supervisors should accompany the supervisor in the field work; report to the supervisor their individual judgment of the instruction observed; study the methods used in presenting suggestions and criticisms; and be given the responsibility of making suggestions and criticisms to the practice teachers. Finally, arrangements should be made with county superintendents, providing an opportunity for each of the prospective supervisors to secure actual practice in supervising typically rural schools. A working knowledge of the records and reports required of supervisors should be secured, but the student should be more than a mere addition to the office force. Under the close supervision of the county superintendent and the rural-education department each student should be assigned a limited number of rural schools and held responsible for the discharge of all duties pertaining to a supervisor of them.

The supervisor of these activities will hold one of the most important positions in the entire system. Too much care cannot be taken in the selection of a capable person. A respectable degree of academic training should be demanded, not, however to the exclusion of other just as desirable qualifications. Close sympathy and much experience in dealing with the problems of the rural schools and training of rural teachers should be required. A tactful and constructive supervisor with a broad training and wide experience in elementary-school work should be sought; and a person of strong personality must be secured. On this person will devolve much of the responsibility in the training of rural-school supervisors. This type of instruction requires much individual work among the students. Only a person of broad training, actual experience, and strong personality may attempt the task with reasonable assurance of being successful. A properly trained

person will earn all the remuneration offered, but a poorly prepared person will defeat much of the efficiency that may be gained in other parts of the system. The many important duties which fall on this person point to the fact that a salary somewhat commensurate with the responsibilities assumed must be provided.

The writer maintains that a policy similar to the one outlined when put into operation will place the profession of rural education on a par with the same grade of work in other elementary schools; that the social stigma on courses in rural education will be removed; that the profession will attract its share of the best abilities; that the opening up of supervisory and administrative positions will induce men as well as women to enter the field; that no longer will "years of successful experience in the country schools" alone suffice as an adequate preparation for assuming the responsibilities of training rural teachers; that the profession of teaching in rural elementary schools will be given a greater degree of permanency; that the system may ultimately be organized on a basis broad enough to insure a highly trained teacher to every elementary rural school in the state; and that this teacher will be inspired and aided by an expert supervisor.

It may be contended that this program will cost too much. Assuming the validity of the principles advocating the democracy of educational opportunities which underlie this discussion, the problem is to ascertain the most efficient and effective and at the same time the most economical method of arriving at these standards. It is self-evident that it will cost more to train all rural teachers for a period of two years than it does to train a portion of them for only one year, as is done under existing conditions. For the year 1915-16 Minnesota paid out \$153,953 toward the support of teacher-training departments in the high schools.<sup>1</sup> This amounts to \$92 per student enrolled, or \$98 per certificated student, which represents an increase of approximately \$11 per student over the expenses of the preceding year. These figures do not include the cost of state supervision, nor provisions for maintenance, interest on capital invested in buildings, upkeep of buildings, rent, fuel,

<sup>1</sup> See twenty-third *Annual Report of the State High-School Inspector*.

and such other incidental expenses as the local school systems are asked to bear.

In an investigation reported by President Felmey, of the Illinois State Normal University<sup>1</sup> the cost of instruction per student enrolled in twenty-five of fifty-one normal schools included in the investigation is placed at \$100. This figure includes only the cost of instruction as determined by the average salary paid to the instructors and by the number of students enrolled. It does not include interest on capital invested, cost of maintenance, and administrative and operating expenses. In a rough way these two estimates are comparable. It must be held in mind that the instruction purchased by the \$100 per student in the normal school represents the work of specialists in each of the branches in which instruction is given; that it includes the salaries paid to a force of critic teachers in the training school and the salary of the supervisors of these training departments. The \$92 per student enrolled in the teacher-training departments of the high schools of Minnesota bought the services of only one instructor in each department, who gave the largest part of the instruction offered, and paid a part of the salaries of teachers in forty-one demonstration schools. When compared with the cost of giving to other elementary teachers an equal degree of skill, the costs do not seem exorbitant.

In the further expansion of this training a limited number of normal schools are able to enjoy the advantages of a large-scale enterprise without impairing their efficiency; while the 120 teacher-training departments in the high schools attempting to meet the demands for growth separately are compelled to struggle toward the same standards of efficiency handicapped by all the limitations of a small-scale enterprise. The rural question has been dealt with in too trivial a manner in the past. Too often its advocates have been clever and alert advertisers, but shortsighted and stupid educators; too often they have been attentive listeners to the approval of the press and calls to the platform, but unprofitable for genuinely interested students of rural problems to meet in the classroom; too often they have been superficial and destructive proclaimers, but not intensive and constructive modifiers of

<sup>1</sup> See *Minnesota State Normal School Quarterly Journal*, September, 1916.

present situations; too often they have sought inspiration, but neglected duties demanding concentration and intensive investigation; and at times they have been so unpatriotic as to seek eagerly for personal gain, but have not shown a real artist's pride in accomplishing a worth-while task for the social welfare. The solution of the problem has by no means been reached. Until the field has been more scientifically organized rural education has failed to meet the demands made on it. Intensive rather than extensive methods should be employed. A sudden solution of the problems cannot be hoped for, but in the immediate expansion of the work, which is inevitable in Minnesota, a firm foundation should be built for future developments in this most promising field.